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# *Cultural Competency in the Classroom* **Creating a Safe Space for All Students**

— Hispanic Center of Western Michigan —

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# Introduction

**Rachel Lopez**

*Director of Youth and Parent Services*

**Kelsey Schoenborn**

*Escalera Program Coordinator*



# Introduction

## Group Share

1. Name
2. School and role
3. What you hope to learn from this workshop



# Introduction

## Workshop Objectives

1. Explore the rapidly changing demographics in Kent County
2. Identify your own cultural lens and biases
3. Learn how to adapt instructional strategies
4. Discover local resources



# Introduction

## Workshop Agenda

- Background Data
- Cultural Competence
- Break
- Student Panel
- Group Activities
- Resources



# Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

## Mission

To unite Hispanics and resources that leads to self sufficiency and empowerment.

## Vision

To be the leader in advancing Hispanic education, economic development, and advocacy.

## Facts

- Founded in 1978
- Serve over 11,000 clients each year
- 30+ bilingual/bicultural employees



# Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

## Departments

- Family Support Services
- Language Services
- Youth and Parent Services



# Youth and Parent Services Department

## Mission

To prepare Latino youth and their families for lifelong success through:

- College Preparation;
- Leadership Development; and
- Workplace Readiness Activities.





# Supporting Our Leaders (SOL)

**600+**  
Youth ages  
12 - 24

**10**  
Programs

**89%**  
1st generation  
college students

**90%**  
Low-income

**72%**  
Hispanic

# Community Impact

**95%**

High School  
Graduation

**89%**

College  
Enrollment

**89%**

1st Generation  
College Students



# Background Data



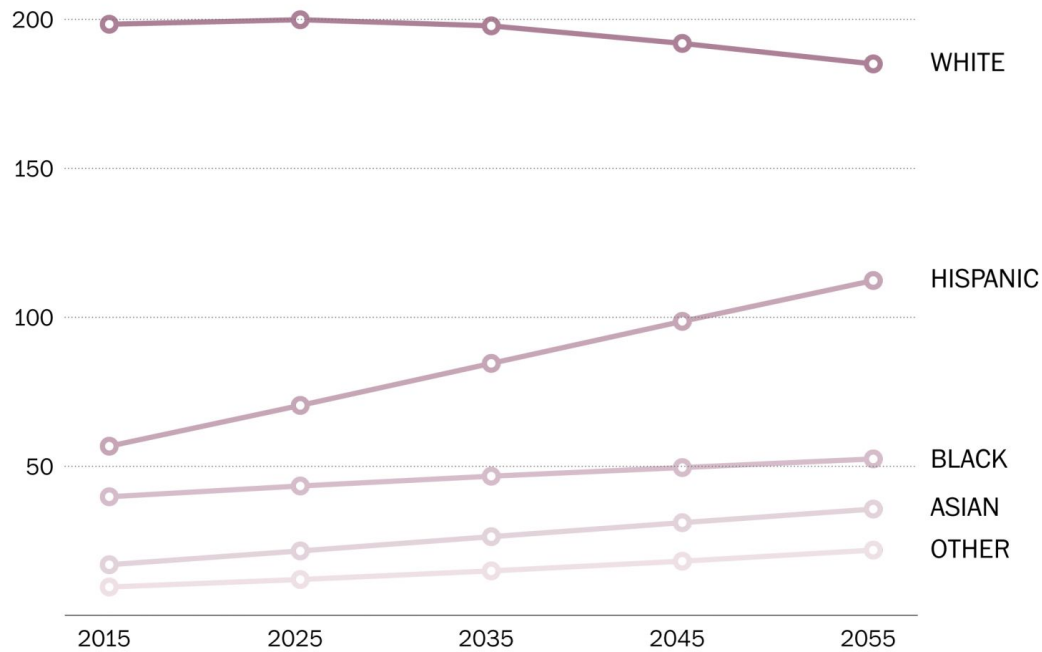
# The New American Reality



# Hispanic Population Growth - U.S.

## Racial and ethnic composition

Projected. Numbers in millions.



SOURCE: CENSUS BUREAU



Source: US Census Bureau

# Hispanic Population Growth

## Kent County

- 10% Hispanic
- 19% 5-17 years old
- 12% less than a high school diploma
- 9% living in poverty

Source: Community Research Institute



# Hispanic Population Growth

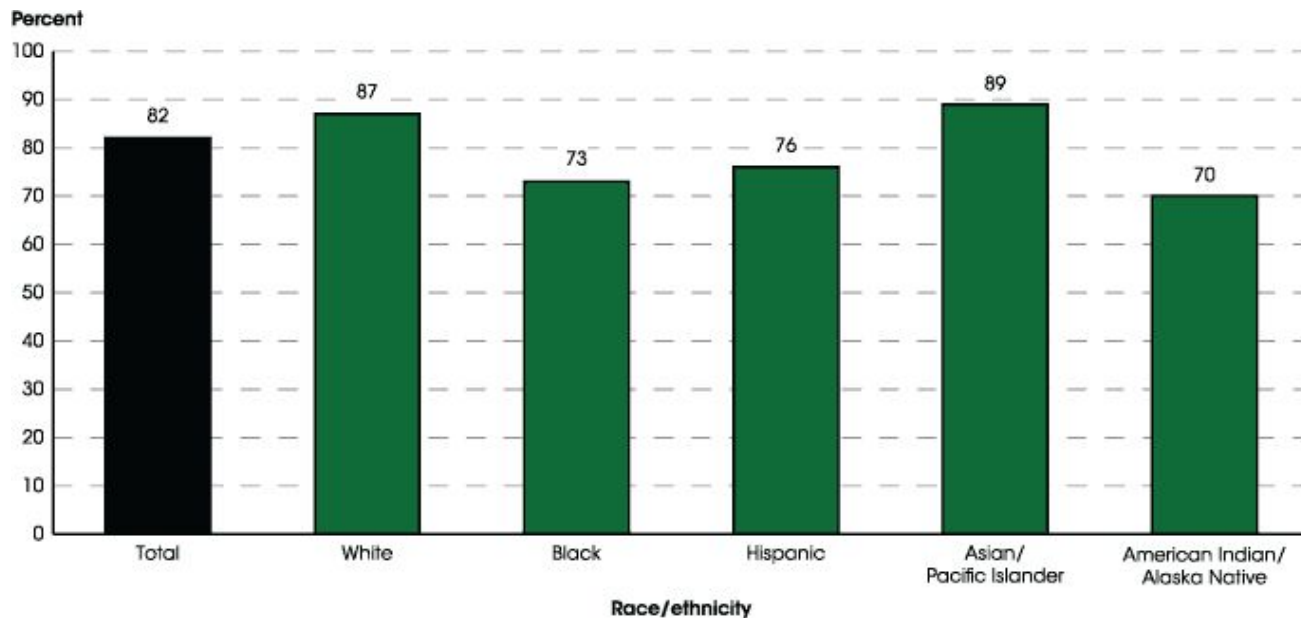
## Grand Rapids - Roosevelt Park Neighborhood

- 77% Hispanic
- 26% ages 5 - 17 years old (largest)
- 64% less than a high school diploma
- 30% living in poverty

Source: Community Research Institute



# High School Graduation Rates - U.S.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2014



# High School Graduation Rates

## State of Michigan

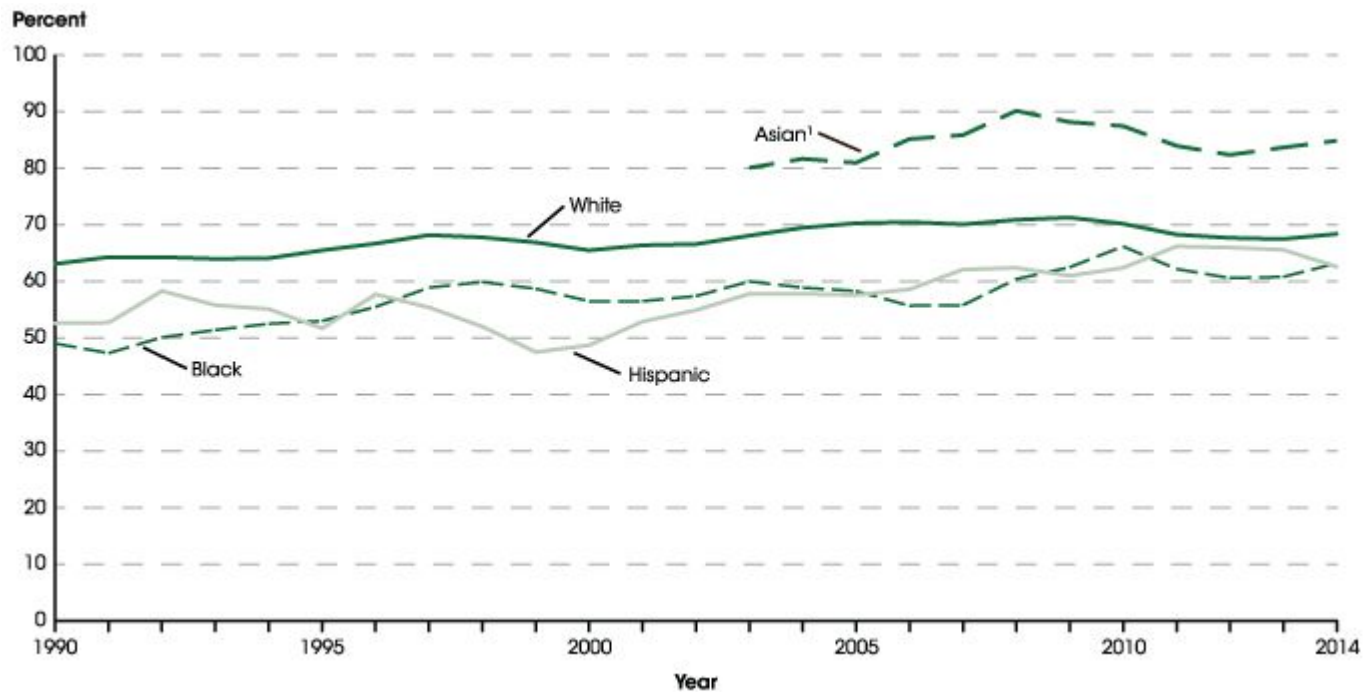
- 80% overall
- 72% Latinos

## Grand Rapids Public Schools

- 56% overall
- 51% Latinos



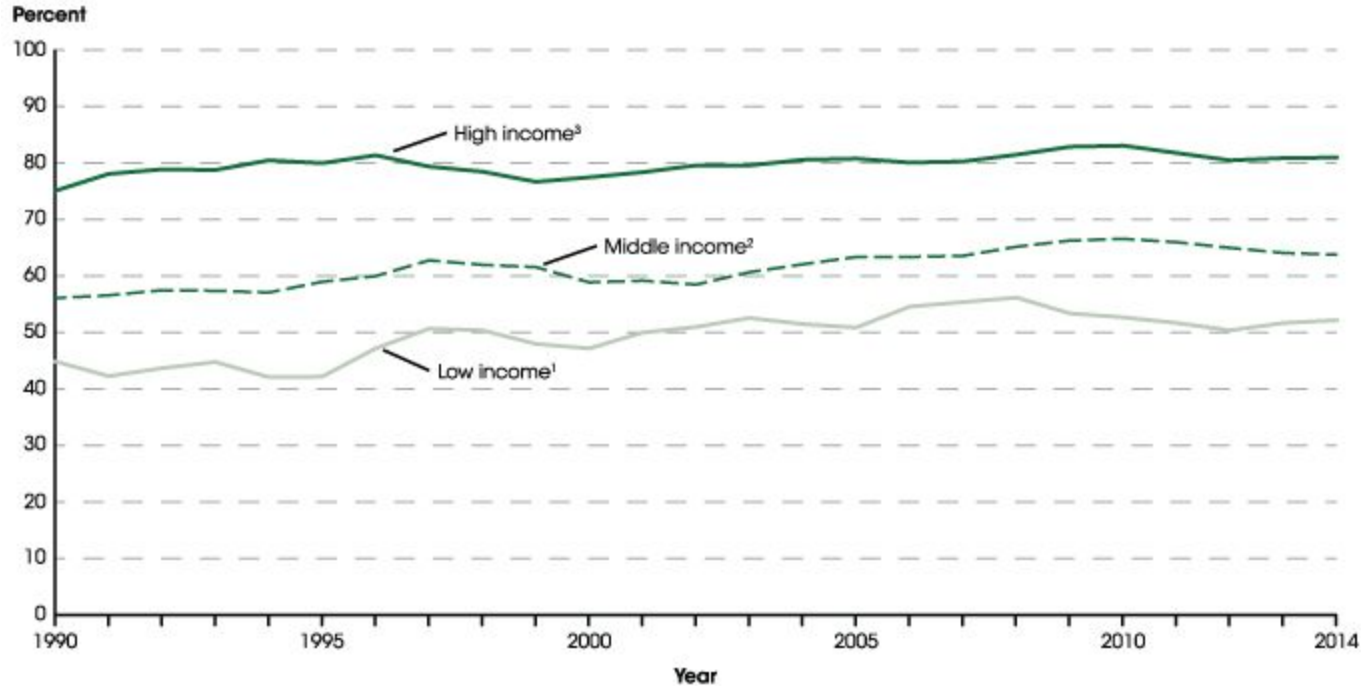
# College Enrollment Rates - U.S.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2014



# College Enrollment Rates - U.S.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics 2014



# College Enrollment Rates

## State of Michigan

- 61% overall
- 58% Latinos

## Grand Rapids Public Schools

- 42% overall
- 28% Latinos



Source: MI School Data 2015

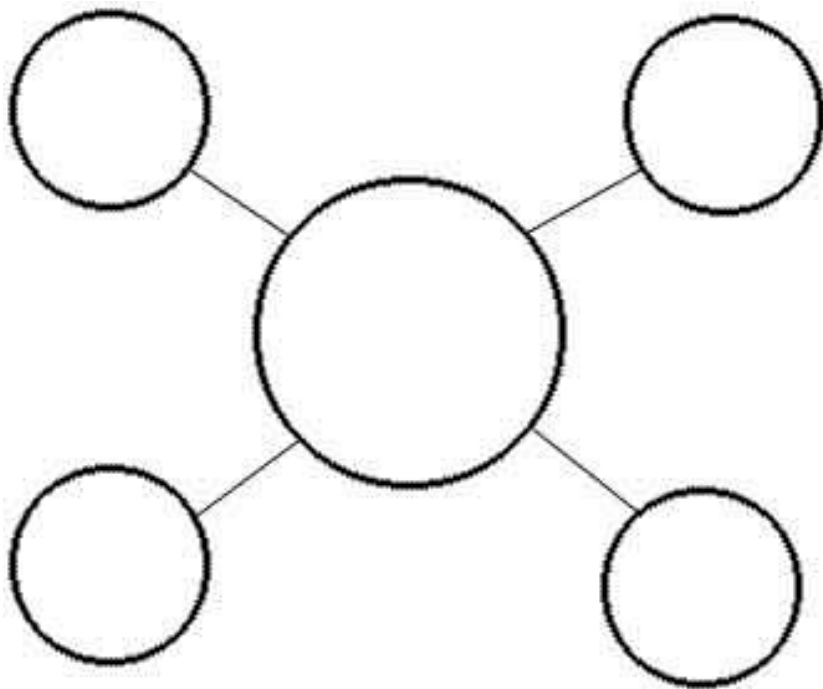
# So What?

## Academic Implications

- Increasing number of Hispanic students
- Widening Latino achievement gap
  - Lower school readiness
  - Hispanic children at age four have the lowest vocabulary, literacy, and math skills
- Shortage of bilingual educators and teachers of color
- Lack of Latino professionals entering STEM fields



# Activity: Who I Am Today



# Introduction to Cultural Competency

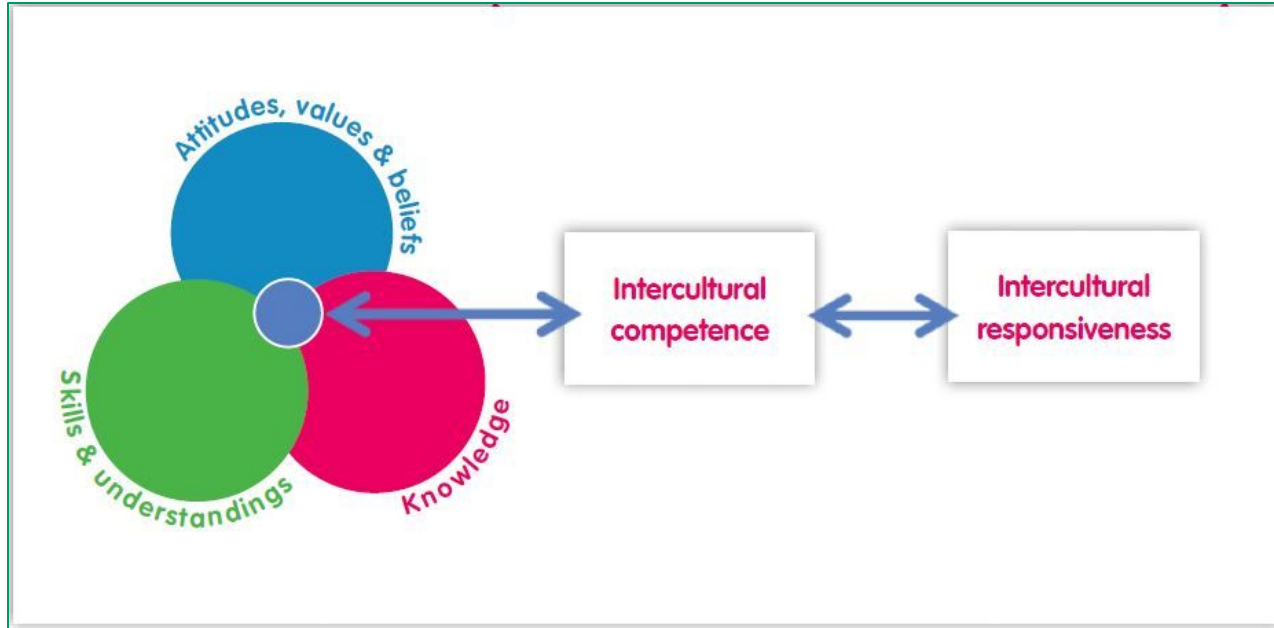


# Cultural Competency





# Culturally Inclusive Classroom

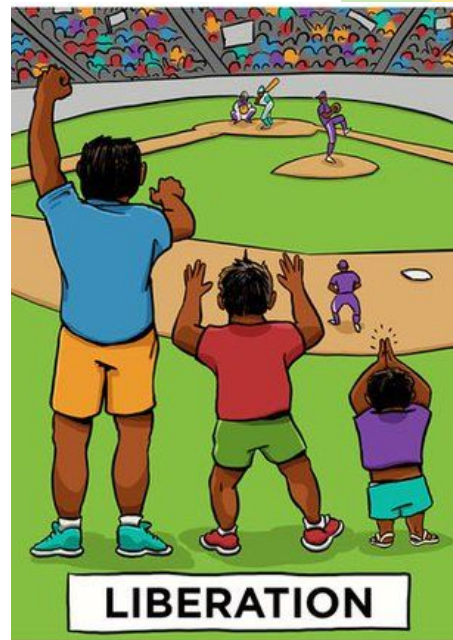
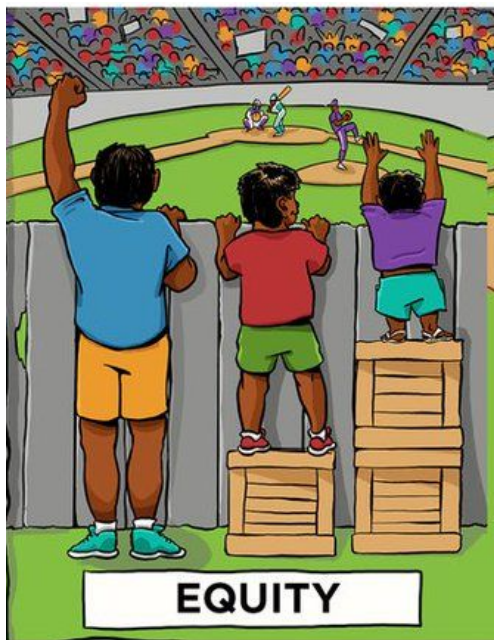
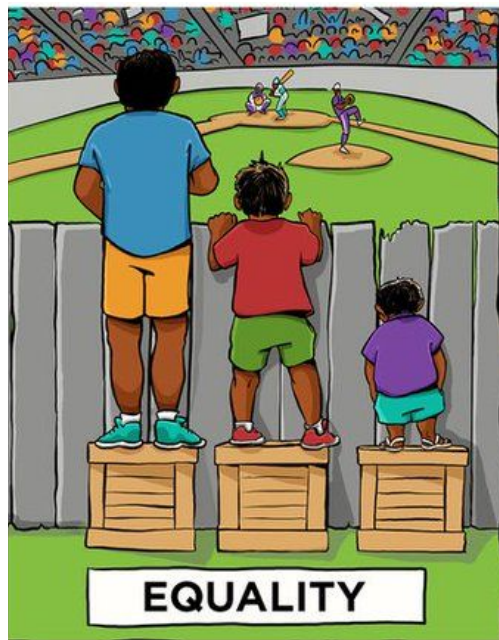


# Diversity vs. Inclusion

(inclusion)  
= DIVERSITY + ENGAGEMENT



# Equality vs. Equity



# Group Activity - Part I

Think about the ***best learning experience*** you've had. What were some of the characteristics of this learning?

1. Share in small groups.
2. Discuss similarities and differences in your stories.
3. Record brief ideas on sticky notes.



# Group Activity - Part II

Think about some of the ***negative learning experiences*** you have had. How was this learning different from your best experience?

1. Share in small groups.
2. Discuss similarities and differences in your stories.
3. Record brief ideas on sticky notes.



**On the piece of paper in front  
of you, draw bread.**





**Brazilian**



**Peruvian**



**Chilean**





# Understanding Your Own Bias

## How to explore your own belief system

- Cultural Proficiency Scale
  - (Lindsey, Roberts, Campbell-Jones, 2005)
- In what way does media shape your thinking?





**In what ways can you combat your  
own bias in the classroom?**



# Understanding Your Own Bias

## Diversify Classroom Text

- Have guest speakers of diverse backgrounds
- Post pictures of diverse people in power
- Explore your classroom library
  - [Multicultural Books for Elementary Students](#)
  - [Young Adult/Adult books by Latinos](#)
    - Not all are by Latinos with US experience



# Understanding Your Own Bias

## Diversify Classroom Text

“There’s nothing more powerful than seeing yourself reflected in something you love; for me, that was literature. It sounds silly, but reading her memoir helped me realize that our stories, Latinos’ stories, are often left unsaid (and unread), but that did not mean they were not worth telling. Santiago’s memoir is the reason I write. It’s the reason I’m committed to telling our stories.”

— *Tanisha Ramirez, Latino Voices Editor*

# English Language Learners (ELL)



# English Language Learners (ELL)

Characteristics of living things.

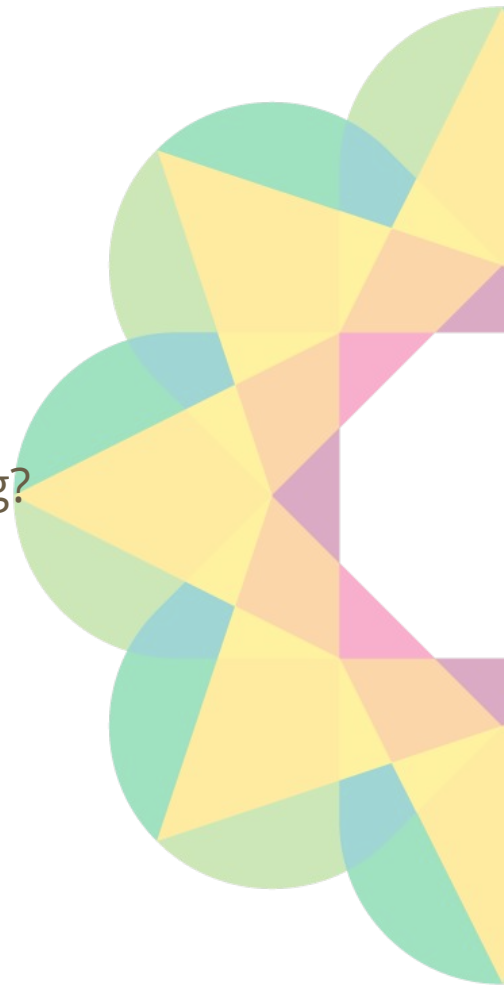


# English Language Learners (ELL)

How did you feel in reaction to this video?

What strategies do/can you use in order to ensure that students have the greatest opportunity possible for learning?

How can the student's bilingualism/multilingualism be celebrated?



# Language Is Not The Only Barrier

- Idiomatic expressions
- Culture-based education
- Understand the student as an individual



# Creating a Safe Space

Remember the Individual

Allow open dialogue

Celebrate but don't alienate





# Break



# Panelists

**Angel Barreto-Cruz**

*Junior - Grand Valley State University*

**Emily Sanchez**

*Senior - Forest Hills Eastern High School*

**Kevin Curiel**

*Student - Grand Rapids Community College*



# Activity



# What's Next?

## Attend Local Cultural Festivals and Events

- [Hispanic Festival](#)
- Mexican Festival
- GRPS Successfest
- [Cesar E. Chavez Social Justice March](#)

## Attend Professional Development Opportunities

- [Partners For a Racism Free Community \(PRFC\)](#)
- [Spectrum Health: Healthier Communities Workshop Series](#)
- [Campfire of West Michigan 4C](#)
- [United Way Community Impact Tours](#)
- [National Council of La Raza \(NCLR\) Annual Conference](#)
- [National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education](#)
- [Feel Like You Belong - Alan Headbloom](#)



# What's Next?

## Volunteer or Connect with Local Organizations

- [Hispanic Center of Western Michigan](#)
- [Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities](#)
- [Roosevelt Park Ministries](#)
- [Bethany Christian Services](#)
- [Youth Community Data Center - Youth Program Directory](#)
- [GVSU Laker Familia Orientation/Move In](#)

## Join Local Committees/Advocacy Groups

- [To College, Through College Initiative](#)
- [Advancing Latino Student Success in Michigan Education \(ALSAME\)](#)
- [Kent County Essential Needs Taskforce](#)



# Additional Articles and Resources

[23 Books by Latinos That Might Change Your Life](#)

[APA: Ethnic and Racial Minorities & Socioeconomic Status](#)

[Creating a Culturally Inclusive Classroom](#)

[Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Strategies](#)

[El Poder / The Power: Latino/a Literature Inclusion Deterrent to the Latino/a Dropout Rate](#)

[Multicultural Books for Children](#)

[National Center for Education Statistics](#)

[Race Relations and Cultural Appropriation](#)

[Reducing Disparities in Early Childhood Education](#)

[What America Will Look Like in 2050](#)



# Questions?

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